

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for June 30th

2 full sized head lettuce
2 baby Tom Thumb lettuce
1 bunch Lacinato kale
1 bunch carrots
1 bunch cilantro with roots
1 kohlrabi
1 bunch green onions
1 bunch baby fennel
1 bag Sugarsnap peas

Large box additions

Shelling peas
Broccoli

Next week's produce (we think): cabbage – carrots – radishes – turnips – lettuce – bok choy – chard

Local Roots Farm News

Imagine that! Another hot and sunny week here in the Pacific Northwest. Thankfully, “they” are forecasting slightly less extreme temperatures for the coming week. High eighties and low nineties seem so reasonable after seeing a forecast of 101° a few days ago. Irrigation sagas continue on the farm, but we are getting some things figured out... The short version of it all is that we got a whole new water storage and pump system set up this year, and are still learning some of its quirks. We run our water through a filter system so it doesn't clog the little micro-emitters on our drip tape, but the filter requires periodic cleaning. The well water that we used to augment the rainfall we captured this winter has a high level of iron in it, and little iron-eating bacteria form a slime on the filter that has been limiting the water pressure in the irrigation system. Jason got in contact with the filter manufacturer, and the very helpful customer service person recommended running the filter disks through the washing machine... seriously!? So we tried it, and it worked like a charm! Pressure is back up where we want to see it and that means more water moves through the system and out onto our thirsty fields.

Our farm has grown slowly but steadily over the last nine years. Every year, we have added a new tool or technique that makes some aspect of farming a little easier or more efficient: vacuum seeder for sowing our flats in the greenhouse; tractor-mounted tools for killing weeds to cut down on hand weeding; water-wheel transplanter for planting seedling faster and with less bending over required... But each of these improvements leads to the discovery of other bottlenecks in the system... like, now that we can plant larger areas more quickly with our new transplanter, we need ways to water those larger areas – our old methods might have been ok in a normal year, but this is far from normal! As stressful as experiences like this are, we have always found solutions, and these challenges make us better prepared to face future problems.

As of this week, we seem to have gotten mostly caught up on the pressing irrigation needs that we observed in our crops last week. The never-ending sun in the forecast is still keeping us busy with irrigation chores from sunup to sundown (and that's a long time at this point in the year!) but we are transitioning into a maintenance pattern instead of survival mode. Three cheers for drip tape!

Ideas and info for this week's produce

This crazy weather is doing crazy things to our early summer crops. Peas have been going from tiny little pods to “pick-me-now” size in just a couple days. Things like this make it extra hard to plan for the CSA harvest, because it's so hard to predict what condition things will be in on our CSA pick day. It is also making for some funny combos of things. I try to choose items for each week's box that go together well from a culinary point of view... but sometimes we just have to pick something when the time is right! There are some fun things in this week's box, and a little creativity might be in order to match them up... Some ideas:

- Kohlrabi slaw with carrots, cilantro, and green onions.
- Kohlrabi and snap pea curry with coconut milk
- Lightly grilled lettuce and green onions (this is a great addition to grilled chicken!)
- Snack platter: Snap peas, carrots, kohlrabi sticks, thinly sliced fennel, with olive oil and salt to dip (or ranch dressing 😊)

Recipe – Salad for supper

- Marinate pre-cooked beans (chickpeas, navy beans or black-eyed peas work well) in a dressing of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, crushed garlic, salt, pepper, and dried basil. Thoroughly coat beans and let stand for up to an hour.
- Wash and dry lettuce and toss with beans and dressing.
- You can also add leftover chicken or fish or grilled veggies (like garlic scapes!).

Fennel and carrots – I think these two vegetables go very well together, either raw or cooked. To cut fennel into snack-size pieces, slice across the grain, e.g. perpendicular to the visible veins that run from the base of the leaf/stalk. If you are not partial to the anise-y flavor of raw fennel, try this:

Recipe – Carrots and Fennel in Brown Butter

- Slice carrots diagonally into thin oval-y shapes. Slice fennel cross-wise to form thin C-shapes.
- Heat a couple tablespoons of butter in a pan until lightly browned, then add the carrots and fennel.
- Once the butter has browned, you can add a little oil or additional butter so there's enough to coat the veggies.
- Cook carrots and fennel, stirring frequently, until carrots and thoroughly cooked and the thin edges begin to brown. I think this dish smells like waffle cones....